



July 16, 2007

MY VIEW: ANDREW HORNING

Now that we're angry, it's time to think, act

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My thanks to all who were with us at the governor's residence in body or spirit for the July 4 Fair Tax rally. But I'd like to correct a few misconceptions.

Anger is appropriate, obviously. But anger is useful only when informed and then harnessed to appropriate and effective action. Citizens cannot truthfully claim surprise at what is happening to us now. I am not the only person who, since at least 1999, has been writing, campaigning and publicly speaking about a building tax problem. This has been in newspapers, blogs, TV reports and many candidates' campaign literature for many years.

We as voters must collectively accept our responsibility for the problems we're now protesting. We cannot solely blame the politicians we hired. They did only what comes naturally to them when we turn our backs on what they do and vote them our approval.

Granted, the governor should not allow a federal judge to unconstitutionally order Indiana into further violation of the Indiana Constitution, particularly Article 8 regarding the Common Schools Fund and corporate property tax.

But I did not choose the governor's residence as a protest against him. Mitch Daniels is, in my opinion, and despite many frustrating actions or inactions, the best governor we've had in 80 years.

I am asking the governor, as the official "cop" of the Indiana Constitution, to help us. He has shown some desire to do so.

I am also appealing to other lawmakers who had long ago seen the writing on the wall and who have been driving for change within the General Assembly. Some, like state Sen. Mike Delph and Rep. Cindy Noe, actually attended the April press conference at which I proposed the Fair Tax for Indiana plan.

Perhaps now that we as voters and taxpayers are showing some will to change, these politicians will buck their system and help us. Because they will have to buck their own system, you know.

Let's be clear on this: Our current webwork of income, excise, payroll, property and sin taxes has for the last 100 years devolved into a corrupt power structure. Complex, loophole-ridden and "progressive" taxation is how politicians reward friends and punish enemies. It is why we lose business to places like the Netherlands and Italy, not just to China's cheap labor. It is why people lose their homes while the Colts and Pacers get the most expensive digs in town. It is why tax money has never gone from rich to poor, but the other way around.

Yes, citizens should be angry. But we cannot expect lawmakers to be any more united in action than we are. We have demonstrated our anger; now's the time to demonstrate unity.

Don't just get mad. Get focused. Get serious. Do your homework, think and act.